



Maine Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Land & Water Quality
O&M Newsletter
December 2007

A monthly newsletter for wastewater discharge licensees, treatment facility operators, and associated persons

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Permittees receiving “Not Acceptable” results on evaluations should have investigated the causes of any discrepancies reported by their provider laboratories. The causes and any corrective actions to prevent laboratory errors in the future should have been detailed in a letter sent to Ken Jones by December 7, 2007. A copy of this letter should have been sent to your compliance inspector as well. We both want to help you improve your laboratory work. Technical assistance is available from DEP staff to WWTF operators for lab issues as needed. Call your facility inspector to discuss problems with your routine lab procedures.



DMR-QA Study 27 Update

Thank you to all wastewater treatment facility operators that participated in the 2007 Discharge Monitoring Report – Quality Assurance Study 27. I have received the evaluations from the various provider laboratories. As in prior years, I did not require copies of the permittee “data packages”. You should however maintain copies of data packages sent to provider laboratories in your files for at least three years.

The vast majority of Maine WWTF labs received “Acceptable” evaluations again in 2007. There were a few problems reported concerning the *E. coli* microbiological test added this year. Congratulations to all of you laboratory technicians that are doing good lab work out there. Your regional compliance inspector and I appreciate your efforts to report accurate DMR data.

Ken Jones
State DMR-QA Coordinator



TOXICS PROGRAM:

Have you gotten your Chapter 530 certification in to the Department yet?

Last year many wastewater facilities received a one page permit modification for toxics testing requirements. These were issued in response to modification of the requirements of Chapter 530 which was amended in 2005. Most who received the modification were granted some reduction in testing requirements. With the reduction came a requirement for facilities to file a certification statement with the Department annually by December 31st of each year.

The statement must describe the following:

- (a) Changes in the number or types of non-domestic wastes contributed directly or indirectly to the wastewater treatment works that may increase the toxicity of the discharge;
- (b) Changes in the operation of the treatment works that may increase the toxicity of the discharge; and
- (c) Changes in industrial manufacturing processes contributing wastewater to the treatment works that may increase the toxicity of the discharge.

Facilities should consult Chapter 530 Section 2 (D)(4) for the language of the full requirement. Some facilities may also have this language incorporated into their permit but for many the only reference to this requirement can be found in the permit modifications under the Reduced Surveillance Testing section.

Facilities that had reduced testing requirements prior to April 2006 probably have the requirement to report clearly spelled out in their permit for many who recently received the reductions in the modification, may not have been aware of this requirement and need to file these as soon as possible.

If there are questions please contact your inspector or Dennis Merrill.

Bill Sheehan



For Practice

1. What is the best long-term fix for high F/M sludge bulking?
 - a. Add chlorine to the RAS.
 - b. Decrease sludge wasting.
 - c. Increase sludge wasting.
 - d. Reduce sludge age.
2. How would you reduce the growth of bacteria in a filter bed?
 - a. Adjust the pH
 - b. Backwash more frequently
 - c. Pre-chlorinate
 - d. Slow the rate of filtration

3. If the feed time for sludge centrifuge operated in a batch mode is less than the optimum time,
 - a. a better centrate will result
 - b. a better effluent quality will result
 - c. a dryer discharge solid will result
 - d. a wetter discharge solid will result
4. Determine the solids loading on a floatation unit if the flow is 0.26 MGD and the influent suspended solids are 2,300 mg/l
 - a. 5,000 lb/day
 - b. 7,600 lb/day
 - c. 2,200 lb/day
 - d. 1,700 lb/day

Operator Certification Renewals

Certified Operators who have *even numbered* certificates will be due for renewal by March 1, 2008. Those operators will receive their renewal notices in early January. To renew your certificate, you need to show proof of at least 18 hours of approved training and pay the renewal fee of \$75.00. If you are due to renew in 2008 and do not have enough training and cannot take the required 18 hours before March 1, 2008, submit your renewal form and renewal fee before March 1st. Include a letter stating when you will be taking the training to meet the 18-hour requirement. If we do not hear from you by March 1, 2008, your certification will become inactive. If you are the operator in charge of your treatment facility, it will be illegal for you to sign the DMR or Form 49 until you reactivate your certificate.

Answers to For Practice:

1. b To reduce bulking caused by a high F:M sludge, you need to reduce the F:M (Food: Microorganism) Ratio. To do this, you must increase the mass of microorganisms in the system. This is done by reducing the wasting rate and increasing the sludge mass in the system
2. c Pre-chlorination provides a chlorine residual in the water influent to the filter, reducing or eliminating microbial growth on the filter.
3. d If a centrifuge is not run for the optimum time, all the water that can be removed from the sludge will not be removed and the sludge will be wetter than it can be.
4. a $0.26\text{MGD} \times 1500 \text{ mg/L} \times 8.34 = 4,987 \text{ pounds}$

DEP Modifies Agreement with JETCC and NEIWPCC to Administer the Wastewater Operator Certification Program

On January 1, 2006, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection entered into an agreement with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) to provide administrative services for the Wastewater Operator Certification Program. The offices of the Joint Environmental Training Coordinating Committee (JETCC) have been handling operator renewals and coordinating the administration of the semi-annual wastewater operator exams since the beginning of 2006. DEP staff continue to approve and issue individual certifications and oversee the program.

As part of the agreement to have JETCC administer this program, the fees collected for the Wastewater Operator Certification Program were set for a period of two years with the agreement that the fees would be reviewed before the end of the second year of that agreement. The fees collected by JETCC were used to directly administer this program.

Upon a careful review of the actual costs of administering the program, we found that NEIWPCC/JETCC lost approximately \$20,000 in the first two years of administering the program. To ensure that there is not a continuing loss to NEIWPCC/JETCC, the DEP supports the following increase to the renewal and examination fees as follows:

The biennial recertification fee has been increased from \$50.00 to \$75.00.

The reinstatement fee is now \$100.00 rather than \$25.00.

The fees for each examination will be \$125.00, up from \$75.00.

This fee increase is not designed to recoup last year's operating loss, but only to provide funds to keep the certification program in the black in the future. This fee increase is accompanied by a number of other efforts by JETCC to reduce costs and increase revenue in other program areas as well. Together all of these changes will make JETCC much stronger financially and continue meeting its statutory requirement to become a self-sustaining organization. It should be noted that when the Wastewater Operator Certification Program was administered by the Department, fees were inadequate to cover administrative costs and that a fee increase is necessary to adequately fund the program no matter what entity administers the program.

JETCC is continuing to explore ways to improve service delivery for the certification program and will be announcing some improvements, including having electronic access to certification status available on the

Internet. While we understand that fee increases are never popular, JETCC, DEP, and NEIWPCC will continue to work together to manage the program so it continues to better meet operator's needs while also keeping the JETCC program operating in the black here in Maine. We anticipate that there will be no additional increase in the renewal or examination fees for a number of years.

If you have any questions, please contact Dick Darling at 287-7806 or by email at dick.darling@maine.gov.

Fall 2007 Exam

By the time you get this O&M News, the Fall exam will probably be history. For those of you who took the exam, the results will, hopefully, be back before Christmas. If you want to sit for the May, 2008 exam, contact JETCC and ask for an application. The deadline for submittal is postmarked by March 24, 2008 or hand delivered to JETCC by March 28, 2008. The date for that exam date is May 14, 2008.

Approved Training

December 11 & 12, 2007 in Freeport, ME – MRWA Annual Conference – sponsored by MRWA – Approved hours depend on sessions attended.

December 12, 2007 in Winthrop, ME – Mixerology 101– sponsored by JETCC – Approved for 6 hours

January 27-30, 2008 in Boston MA – Annual NEWEA Conference – Sponsored by NEWEA – Approved for various hours

Note: JETCC stands for Joint Environmental Training Coordinating Committee – PO Box 487 – Scarborough, ME 04070-0487 – Tel (207) 253-8020

Efficiency Maine is a program of the Maine
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House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0018
Tel: 207-287-8350

MRWA stands for Maine Rural Water
Association - 14 Maine Street, Box 36 -
Brunswick, ME 04011 – Tel (207) 729-6569

NEIWPC stands for New England
Interstate Water Pollution Control
Commission – 116 John St. – Lowell, MA
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NEWEA stands for New England Water
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